

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR UR

SUBJECT: SOVIETS MOOT FREE FLOW OF IDEOLOGY

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

REF: A. MOSCOW 15881 B. MOSCOW 16147

1. SUMMARY. MOSCOW UNCORKED A PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE PRO-
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POUNDING THE ADVANTAGES OF SOCIALISM. THE OFFENSIVE MAY, AS
SOME OF OUR SOURCES HERE HAVE IT (AND IN LINE WITH BREZHNEV'S
SUGGESTION IN ALMA ATA), HE ACCOMPANIED BY A GREATER WILLING-
NESS TO TOLERATE THE PENETRATION OF WESTERN IDEAS AND EXAMPLES

INTO THE CAMP. BUT WE WOULD GUESS THAT NOT EVERYONE IN THE REGIME IS PREPARED TO BUY THIS PACKAGE INTACT. WHILE A FREER EXCHANGE OF IDEAS WOULD PROBABLY POSE NO SERIOUS THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF THE COUNTRY, IT WOULD SURELY PRODUCE SITUATIONS WHICH WOULD DENT THE SENSIBILITIES OF MANY POLITBURO MEMBERS--FOR EXAMPLE, THE PLAYBACK INTO THE USSR OF WORLD OPINION RUCKUSES STIRRED UP BY SAKHAROV'S AND SOLZHENITSYN'S. AND SINCE IT MUST BE CARRIED OUT BY THE VERY PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES WOULD BE COMPLICATED BY IT--THE IDEOLOGISTS AND PROPAGANDISTS--THE PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE WILL PROBABLY BE IMPLEMENTED MUCH MORE ENTHUSIASTICALLY THAN THE LOWERING OF BARRIERS TO IDEAS. SO FAR, THERE ARE NO BREAKTHROUGHS ON THE LATTER SCORE SINCE THE CESSATION OF JAMMING; BUT DESPITE OPPOSITION, THE BREZHNEV LEADERSHIP MAY MAKE SOME MOVES--AT LEAST SYMBOLIC ONES--IN THE CONTEXT OF CSCE. END SUMMARY.

2. EVIDENCE ACCUMULATES THAT, AT THE MEETINGS IN MOSCOW LAST MONTH WITH FRATERNAL PARTY SECRETARIES AND WITH SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES STATIONED ABROAD, MOSCOW UNLEASHED A PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE AIMED AT CONVINCING BOTH INHABITANTS OF THE CAMP AND DISGRUNTLED WESTERNERS OF THE ADVANTAGES OF SOCIALISM. WE NOTE, IN SOVIET MEDIA SURVEYS AT THE YEAR'S END, AN EMERGING SMUGNESS ABOUT SOVIET STABILITY, PROGRESS, AND TRANQUILITY, OFTEN QUITE EXPLICITLY CONTRASTED WITH THE TURMOIL BESETTING THE DEVELOPED NATIONS OF THE WEST. SUCH COMPARISONS ARE STANDARD FARE, BUT THE ENERGY CRISIS AND OTHER ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES IN THE WEST PROVIDE A WINDFALL OF AMMUNITION, WHICH--ADDED TO SOVIET AGRICULTURAL RECOVERY--MAY ACCOUNT FOR RING OF CONFIDENCE IN CURRENT COMPARISONS. CIRCUMSTANCES ARE THUS RIPE FOR A PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE.

3. U.S. IS NOT IMMUNE FROM PRESS NEEDLING ON ECONOMIC ISSUES, WHICH SEEMS TO BE ON THE UPSWING. AS WE HAVE REPORTED, TREATMENT OF U.S. IN THE VIETNAM CONTEXT HAS ALSO BECOME SHARPER. BUT BENIGN MATERIAL ON THE U.S. ALSO CONTINUES TO APPEAR IN THE MEDIA IN SIGNIFICANT QUANTITY.
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EXAMPLE OF THIS PROPAGANDA MIX IS PRAVDA JANUARY 6, WHICH IN ITS INTERNATIONAL REVIEW ASSERTS THAT U.S. ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES SHOW THAT ACHIEVEMENTS OF SCIENTIFIC-TECHNICAL REVOLUTION CONTRADICT CAPITALIST SYSTEM; SAME ISSUE CARRIES HIGHLY POSITIVE TASS INTERVIEW OF SEC. SHULTZ ON U.S.-SOVIET TRADE (SEPTEL).

4. SMUG TONE ALSO COMES THROUGH IN CENTRAL COMMITTEE APPEAL TO SOVIET PEOPLE PUBLISHED IN CENTRAL PRESS JANUARY 4 (MOSCOW 0150), DESPITE FACT THAT MAIN AIM OF APPEAL IS EXHORTATION TO ASSURE FULFILLMENT OF FIVE-YEAR PLAN TARGETS. APPEAL ACKNOWLEDGES OFFICIALLY FOR FIRST TIME THAT AGRI-

CULTURAL DIFFICULTIES IN 1972 HAD IMPACT ON ENTIRE ECONOMY AND CALLED INTO QUESTION POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN FULFILLING FIVE YEAR PLAN GOALS. NEVERTHELESS, APPEAL ASSERTS THAT SETBACKS HAVE BEEN OVERCOME AND OPPORTUNITY EXISTS NOT ONLY TO FULFILL PRESENT PLAN, BUT ALSO TO CREATE BASIS FOR FURTHER GROWTH OF COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AND TO INCREASE MATERIAL AND CULTURAL WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE.

5. AN ARTICLE IN DECEMBER 29 SOVETSKAYA LATVIA BY LATVIAN CP CENTRAL COMMITTEE LECTURER A. LOMAKO ILLUSTRATES THE DELICACY WITH WHICH WORKING-LEVEL PROPAGANDISTS CONTINUE TO HANDLE BREZHNEV'S "VICTORY THROUGH CONTACTS" APPROACH. ENTITLED "DETENTE AND IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE," ARTICLE REJECTS HOBSON'S CHOICE WHICH OPPONENTS OF DETENTE WOULD IMPOSE ON USSR--EITHER ADOPT THE WESTERN LIFESTYLE OR FORGET ABOUT PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. LOMAKO COMES OUT STRONGLY FOR DETENTE AND COOPERATION IN VARIOUS FIELDS, BUT GIVES EQUAL WEIGHT TO NECESSITY OF IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE. BASIC PREMISE OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IS "FULL CONFIDENCE" IN ADVANTAGES OF SOCIALIST SYSTEM. COMMUNISTS "ARE IN NO WAY AFRAID OF POLEMICS WITH BOURGEOIS THEORETICIANS; ON THE CONTRARY, THEY SEEK THEM AND IN PROCESS WIN NEW ADHERENTS." LOMAKO REFERS AT ONE POINT TO THE WEST'S STRONG EMPHASIS ON HUMAN CONTACTS ISSUES IN CSCE, MAKING CLEAR THAT HANDLING THIS PRESSURE IS ELEMENT OF CURRENT SOVIET CAMPAIGN IN IDEOLOGICAL FIELD. IT IS ALSO NOTE-WORTHY THAT LOMAKO ADDUCES AS PROOF OF SOCIALIST SUPERIORITY BREZHNEV'S (UNPUBLISHED) REPORT OF ECONOMIC RESULTS AT DECEMBER PLENUM.

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6. A DARK CLOUD ON HORIZON WHICH COULD AFFECT SOVIET IMAGE OF CONFIDENCE VIS-A-VIS THE WEST, AS WELL AS REGIME DELIBERATIONS ON EASING OF CONTACTS AND IDEAS, ARISES FROM PUBLICATION IN THE WEST OF SOLZHENITSYN'S NEW WORK "GULAG ARCHIPELAGO." THE ABSENCE OF DEFINITIVE SOVIET REACTION THUS FAR PROBABLY REFLECTS THE REGIME'S PERPLEXITY, AND POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION, ABOUT HOW TO FIT THIS DEVELOPMENT INTO SOVIET PROPAGANDA AND IDEOLOGICAL STRATEGY.

7. SINCE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE IS SO CLOSELY RELATED TO CSCE BASKET THREE ISSUES, WE CONTINUE TO WATCH FOR SIGNS OF MOVEMENT IN THE SOVIET POSITION. SINCE THE CESSATION OF JAMMING, THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING CONCRETE--IN ACTIONS, IN PRIVATE REMARKS OF SOVIET OFFICIALS, OR IN THE PRESS. A DETAILED REVIEW OF CSCE IN JANUARY 3 SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA DEVIATES NOT AN INCH FROM STANDARD SOVIET POSITIONS AS THEY STOOD AT ADJOURNMENT IN DECEMBER. ARTICLE SAYS PROGRESS IS SLOWEST ON CONTACTS AND INFORMATION, CHARGING THAT SOME COUNTRIES ARE MAKING DEMANDS

BORDERING ON INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. IT ASSERTS
SOVIET POSITION IS PERFECTLY CLEAR IN OPPOSING
INTERFERENCE AND INSISTING UPON RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY,
LAWS AND TRADITIONS.

8. THE OFT-HEARALDED SOVIET CONCESSION OF MAKING WESTERN
NEWSPAPERS MORE EASILY AVAILABLE HAS NOT MATERIALIZED.
WHILE SUCH PAPERS HAVE IN PAST YEAR OR TWO BECOME
IRREGULARLY AVAILABLE AT PLACES FREQUENTED BY
FOREIGNERS, USUALLY UPON DEMAND BUT NOT DISPLAYED,
THERE HAS BEEN NO NOTICEABLE CHANGE IN PAST DAYS OR
WEEKS EITHER IN MOSCOW OR LENINGRAD, ASIDE FROM TOKEN
AVAILABILITY AT SHEREMETIEVO AIRPORT MOSCOW. EMBASSY
PARIS HAS CHECKED INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE AND LE MONDE,
WHO SAY NEWSTAND SALES COPIES SENT TO MOSCOW
REMAIN AT PREVIOUS LOW LEVEL OF A FEW DOZEN (PARIS 0049).
SOMMERLATTE

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